

REMARKS

Claims 1-2, 5-8, 10-11, 14-18 and 20 have been amended. Claim 3 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. No new claims have been added. Accordingly, claims 1-2 and 4-22 are currently pending in the above-identified application.

Priority

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's acknowledgment of the claim for priority and safe receipt of the priority document.

In the Specification

The specification has been amended for purposes of clarity. Discussion of Step S222 in Fig. 12 was inadvertently omitted from the specification. Therefore, the specification has been amended in a manner consistent with Fig. 12, page 17, lines 15-17 and page 18, lines 6-12, as well as the remaining portions of the originally filed application. As such, it is submitted that no new matter has been added.

35 U.S.C. §§102 and 103

Claims 1-11 and 16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Sitaraman et al (U.S. Patent No.

6,539,431). Claims 12-15 and 17-22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103a as being unpatentable over Sitaraman in view of Short et al (U.S. Patent No. 6,636,894). These rejections are traversed as follows.

The present invention is directed to a server assignment device. A user record storage unit stores user records of service sent from a plurality of service servers for each service user. The user records are updated based on the transmittal of service from the service servers to the service users. One of the plurality of service servers is selected in accordance with the user records of a service user with the service user upon reception of a connection request from the service user. The address of the selected one of the service servers is sent to the service requested user.

More specifically, based upon user records of service of a service user stored in a USER RECORD TABLE 304, as shown in Fig. 1 by way of example only, a service server is selected among a plurality of server groups 402, 403, 404 in a service server 401. The selected service server is connected with the service user. In accordance with this feature, the provision of services in accordance with track records of service of a service user is attained, thereby resulting in the overall improvement of sales of services.

On the other hand, Sitaraman et al discloses a system in which an address is assigned to a user while a predetermined settings configuration scheme is maintained (see column 4, lines 37-46). More specifically, when a user 90 uses a host 88, as shown in Fig. 3, an address for host 88 is assigned to user 90.

On the other hand, according to the present invention, the address of a service server which provides a service is allocated to the user as opposed to the address of a host device. As such, the object being allocated according to the present invention is completely different from Sitaraman et al.

Furthermore, Sitaraman et al disclose that the type of network service is provided as contracted for by the user (see column 7, line 62 to column 8, line 9). In this portion it is recited that the "pool identifier reflects the type of network service contracted for by the subscriber with the subscriber's ISP and is used to determine what type of address to allocate to the subscriber when the subscriber logs on".

On the other hand, according to the present invention, the records of service of a service user are updated or renewed by actual results of service sent from the selected service server. Therefore, the service server that is to be

connected to a service user varies depending upon the frequency at which the service user requests a service to the service servers. Therefore, it is submitted that the presently claimed invention is completely different from the teaching of Sitaraman et al.

The deficiencies in Sitaraman et al are not overcome by resort to Short et al. Short et al disclose a system in which an incentive is provided to a user. However, Short et al fail to disclose or suggest a feature of the present invention in that a service server that is to be connected with a service user is selected based on the service records of the service user. In addition, Short et al do not disclose that these service records are renewed or updated upon actual transmission of service from a selected service server and that the service records are used in order to connect a service user with a service server. As such, it is submitted that the pending claims patentably define the present invention over the cited art.

Conclusion

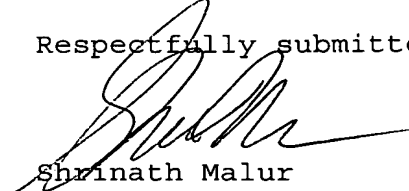
In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants contend that the above-identified application is

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now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration and reexamination are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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